

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 SS-20 NSC-10 DODE-00 DRC-01 /112 W

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R 032225Z DEC 73

FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3042

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 3514

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEBASSY VALLETTA

USDOCOSOUTH

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 5878

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, MT, NATO

SUBJECT: DECEMBER 3 NAC: MALTA; DEATH OF ADMIRAL COLBERT

1. DEATH OF FORMER CINSOUTH ADM. COLBERT, USN -- SYG OPENED DECEMBER 3 NAC WITH ANNOUNCEMENT OF DEATH OF ADM. COLBERT PREVIOUS NIGHT IN WASHINGTON. HE AND DE STAERCKE AS DEAN OF PERMREPS PRAISED ADM. COLBERT'S SERVICE IN NATO COMMAND, AND SYG SAID HE WOULD SEND CABLE TO SECDEF AND MRS. COLBERT EXPRESSING DEEP SENSE OF LOSS. RUMSFELD ACKNOWLEDGED STATEMENTS ON BEHALF OF USG.

2. MALTA -- PECK (UK) REPORTED REQUEST BY MALTESE PM MINTOFF TO UK HICOM IN VALLETTA TO HAVE UK NAVY INTERCEPT TWO ISRAELI PATROL CRAFT WHICH HAD ANCHORED IN MALTESE TERRITORIAL WATERS ON NIGHT ON NOV. 29-30. MINTOFF ASSERTED ON BASIS OF INFO FROM ARAB SOURCES THAT ISRAELI CRAFT HAD BEEN IN NATO EXERCISE AND HAD BEEN REFUELLED BY UK SHIP OPERATING IN VICINITY. AFTER SEEKING INSTRUCTIONS, NICOM REPLIED THAT UK SHIP HAD OBSERVED ISRAELIS WHILE OPERATING IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS, BUT HAD NO CONTACT WITH THEM, THAT THERE WERE NO NATO OPERATIONS IN THE AREA, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND THAT UK HAD NO BASIS FOR ACTION TO RECALL DEPARTED ISRAELI CRAFT. HE ASKED IF OTHER ALLIES HAD EXPERIENCED ANY REPERCUSSIONS.

3. CATALANO (ITALY) SAID MINTOFF HAD ASKED FOR CORROBORATION
OF ARAB REPORT FROM GOI. ITALIANS HAD CHECKED WITH UK AND
REPLIED ALONG SAME LINES AS HICOM.

4. SYG SAID HE ASSUMED ISRAELIS HAD EXERCISED INTERNATIONAL LEGAL
RIGHT TO SEEK REFUGE IN TERRITORIAL WATERS DURING STORM.
THERE WAS NO FURTHER DISCUSSION.
RUMSFELD

CONFIDENTIAL

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TEL AVIV
AMEBASSY VALLETTA
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